

## FOR YOUNG AND OLD.

DR. TALMAGE PREACHES A SERMON  
ON HOME LIFE.

**Points Out the Duty of Parents and  
Admonishes the Children—Don't  
Stuff the Young People With Reli-  
gion, Says the Great Divine.**

WASHINGTON, March 25.—This discourse of Dr. Talmage will interest young men, while it is full of advice and encouragement to parents who are trying to bring up their children aright; text, Proverbs x, 1, "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

In this graphic way Solomon sets forth the idea that the good or evil behavior of children blesses or blights the parental heart. I know there are persons who seem to have no especial interest in the welfare of their children. The father says: "My boy must take the risks I took in life. If he turns out well, all right. If he turns out ill, he will have to bear the consequences. He has the same chance that I had. He must take care of himself." A shepherd might just as well thrust a lamb into a den of lions and say, "Little lamb, take care of yourself."

Nearly all the brute creation are kind enough to look after their young. I was going through a woods, and I heard a shrill cry in a nest. I climbed up to the bird's nest, and I found that the old bird had left the brood to starve. But that is a very rare occurrence. Generally a bird will pick your eyes out rather than surrender her young to your keeping or your touch. A lion will rend you if you come too near the whelps. Even the barnyard fowl, with its clumsy foot and heavy wing, will come at you if you approach its young too nearly, and God certainly intended to have fathers and mothers as kind as the brutes.

Christ comes through all our households today, and he says: "You take care of the bodies of your children and the minds of your children. What are you doing for their immortal souls?" I read of a ship that foundered. A lifeboat was launched. Many of the passengers were in the waters. A mother, with one hand beating the wave and the other hand holding her little child out toward the lifeboat, cried out, "Save my child!" And that impassioned cry is the one that finds an echo in every parental heart in this land today. "Save my child!" That man out there says: "I have fought my own way through life, I have got along tolerably well, the world has buffeted me, and I have had many a hard struggle. It doesn't make much difference what happens to me, but save my child!" You see I have a subject of stupendous import, and I am going, as God may help me, to show the cause of parental solicitude and then the alleviations of that solicitude.

**Parental Solicitude.**  
The first cause of parental solicitude, I think, arises from the imperfection of parents on their own part. We all somehow want our children to avoid our faults. We hope that if we have any excellences they will copy them. But the probability is they will copy our faults and omit our excellences. Children are very apt to be echoes of the parental life. Some one meets a lad in the back street, finds him smoking and says: "Why, I am astounded at you! What would your father say if he knew this? Where did you get that cigar?" "Oh, I picked it up on the street." "What would your father say and your mother say if they knew this?" "Oh," he replies, "that's nothing. My father smokes!" There is not one of us today who would like to have our children copy all our examples. And that is the cause of solicitude on the part of all of us. We have so many faults we do not want them copied and stereotyped in the lives and characters of those who come after us.

Then solicitude arises from our conscious insufficiency and unwisdom of discipline. Out of 20 parents there may be one parent who understands how thoroughly and skillfully to discipline; perhaps not more than one out of 20. We, nearly all of us, err on one side or on the other. Here is a father who says, "I am going to bring up my children right; my sons shall know nothing but religion; shall see nothing but religion, and hear nothing but religion." They are routed out at 6 o'clock in the morning to recite the Ten Commandments. They are awakened up from the sofa on Sunday night to recite the Westminster Catechism. Their bedroom walls are covered with religious pictures and quotations of Scripture, and when the boy looks for the day of the month he looks for it in a religious almanac. If a minister comes to the house, he is requested to take the boy aside and tell him what a great sinner he is. It is religion morning, noon and night.

Time passes on, and the parents are waiting for the return of the son at night. It is 9 o'clock, it is 10 o'clock, it is 11 o'clock, it is 12 o'clock, it is half past 12 o'clock. Then they hear a rattling of the night key, and George comes in and hastens up stairs lest he be accosted. His father says, "George, where have you been?" He says, "I have been out." Yes, he has been out, and he has been down, and he has started on the broad road to ruin for this life and ruin for the life to come, and the father says to his wife, "Mother, the Ten Commandments are a failure; no use of Westminster Catechism; I have done my very best for that boy; just see how he has turned out." Ah, my friend, you stuffed that boy with religion; you had no sympathy with innocent hilarities; you had no common sense. A man at midlife said to me, "I haven't much desire for religion; my

father was as good a man as ever lived, but he jammed religion down my throat when I was a boy until I got disgusted with it, and I haven't wanted any of it since." That father erred on one side.

**Why Discipline Fails.**  
Then the discipline is an entire failure in many households because the father pulls one way and the mother pulls the other way. The father says, "My son, I told you if I ever found you guilty of falsehood again I would chastise you, and I am going to keep my promise." The mother says: "Don't! Let him off this time."

A father says: "I have seen so many that make mistake by too great severity in the rearing of their children. Now, I will let my boy do as he pleases. He shall have full swing. Here, my son, are tickets to the theater and opera. If you want to play cards, do so; if you don't want to play cards, you need not to play them. Go when you want and come back when you want to. Have a good time. Go it!" Give a boy plenty of money and ask him not what he does with it, and you pay his way straight to perdition. But after awhile the lad thinks he ought to have a still larger supply. He has been treated, and he must treat. He must have wine suppers. There are larger and larger expenses.

After awhile one day a messenger from the bank over the way calls in and says to the father of the household of which I am speaking, "The officers of the bank would like to have you step over a minute." The father steps over, and a bank officer says, "Is that your check?" "No," he says; "that is not my check. I never make an 'H' in that way; I never put a curl to the 'Y' in that way. That is not my writing. That is not my signature. That is a counterfeit. Send for the police." "Stop!" says the bank officer. "Your son wrote that."

Now the father and mother are waiting for the son to come home at night. It is 12 o'clock, it is half past 12 o'clock, it is 1 o'clock. The son comes through the hallway. The father says: "My son, what does all this mean? I gave you every opportunity. I gave you all the money you wanted, and here in my old days I find that you have become a spendthrift, a libertine and a sot." The son says: "Now, father, what is the use of your talking that way? You told me to go it, and I just took your suggestion." And so to strike the medium between severity and too great leniency, to strike the happy medium between the two and to train our children for God and for heaven, is the anxiety of every intelligent parent.

**Childish Sinfulness.**  
Another great solicitude is in the fact that so early is developed childish sinfulness. Morning glories put out their bloom in the early part of the day, but as the hot sun comes on they close up. While there are other flowers that blaze their beauty along the Amazon for a week at a time without closing, yet the morning glory does its work as certainly as Victoria regia. So there are some children that just put forth their bloom, and they close and they are gone. There is something supernatural about them while they tarry, and there is an ethereal appearance about them. There is a wonderful depth to their eye, and they are gone. They are too delicate a plant for this world. The Heavenly Gardener sees them, and he takes them in.

But for the most part the children that live sometimes get cross and pick up bad words in the street or are disposed to quarrel with brother or sister and show that they are wicked. You see them in the Sabbath school class. They are so sunny and bright you would think they were always so, but the mother looking over at them remembers what an awful time she had to get them ready. Time passes on. They get considerably older, and the son comes in from the street from a pugilistic encounter bearing on his appearance the marks of defeat, or the daughter practices some little deception in the household. The mother says, "I can't always be scolding and finding fault, but this must be stopped." So in many a household there is the sign of sin, the sign of the truthfulness of what the Bible says when it declares, "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

Some go to work and try to correct all this, and the boy is picked at and picked at and picked at. That always is ruinous. There is more help in one good thunderstorm than in five days of cold drizzle. Better the old fashioned style of chastisement, if that be necessary, than the fretting and the scolding which have destroyed so many. There is also a cause of great solicitude sometimes because our young people are surrounded by so many temptations. A castle may not be taken by a straightforward siege, but suppose there be inside the castle an enemy, and in the night he shoves back the bolt and swings open the door. Our young folks have foes without, and they have foes within. Who does not understand it? Who is the man here who is not aware of the fact that the young people of this day have tremendous temptations?

Some man will come to the young people and try to persuade them that purity and honesty and uprightness are a sign of weakness. Some man will take a dramatic attitude, and he will talk to the young man, and he will say: "You must break away from your mother's apron strings; you must get out of that Puritanical straitjacket. It is time you were your own master. You are verdant; you are green; you are unsophisticated. Come with me. I will show you the world. I'll show you life. Come with me. You need to see the world. It won't hurt you." After awhile the young man says: "Well, I can't afford to be odd; I can't afford to be peculiar; I can't afford to

sacrifice all my friends. I'll just go and see for myself." Farewell to innocence, which, once gone, never fully comes back! Do not be under the delusion that because you repent of sin you get rid forever of its consequences. I say farewell to innocence, which, once gone, never fully comes back!

**Traps For the Young.**  
Oh, how many traps set for the young! Styles of temptation just suited to them. Do you suppose that a man who went clear to the depths of dissipation went down in one great plunge? Oh, no! At first it was a fashionable hotel. Marble floor. No unclean pictures behind the counter. No drunken hiccup while they drink, but the click of cut glass to the elegant sentiment. You ask that young man now to go into some low restaurant and get a drink, and he would say, "Do you mean to insult me?" But the fashionable and the elegant hotel is not always close by, and now the young man is on the down grade. Farther and farther down until he has about struck the bottom of the depths of ruin. Now he is in the low restaurant. The cards so greasy you can hardly tell who has the best hand. Gambling for drinks. Shuffle away, shuffle away. The landlord stands in his shirt sleeves, with his hands on his hips, waiting for an order to fill up the glasses.

The clock strikes 12—the tolling of the funeral bell of a soul. The breath of eternal woe flushes in that young man's cheeks. In the jets of the gaslight the fiery tongue of the worm that never dies. Two o'clock in the morning, and now they are sound asleep in their chairs. Landlord comes around and says: "Wake up, wake up! Time to shut up." "What?" says the young man. "Time to shut up?" Push them all out into the night air. Now they are going home. Going home! Let the wife crouch in the corner and the children hide under the bed. What was the history of that young man? He began his dissipation in the barroom of a Fifth avenue hotel and completed his damnation in the lowest grogshop.

Sometimes sin does not halt in that way. Sometimes sin even comes to the drawing room. There are leprous hearts sometimes admitted in the highest circles of society. He is so elegant, he is so bewitching in his manner, he is so refined, he is so educated, no one suspects the sinful design, but after awhile the talons of death come forth. What is the matter with that house? The front windows have not been open for six months or a year. A shadow has come down on that domestic hearth, a shadow thicker than one woven of midnight and hurricane. The agony of that parent makes him say, "Oh, I wish I had buried my children when they were small!" Loss of property? No. Death in the family? No. Madness? No. Some villain, kid gloved and diamonded, lifted that cup of domestic bliss until the sunlight struck it, and all the rainbows played around the rim and then dashed it into desolation and woe, until the harpies of darkness clapped their hands and all the voices of the pit uttered a loud "Ha, ha!"

**Morals and Manners.**  
The statistic has never been made up in these great cities of how many have been destroyed and how many beautiful homes have been overthrown. If the statistic could be presented, it would freeze your blood in a solid cake at your heart. Our great cities are full of temptations, and to vast multitudes of parents these temptations become a matter of great solicitude.

But now for the alleviations. First of all, you save yourself a great deal of trouble, oh, parent, if you can early watch the children and educate them for God and heaven! "The first five years of my life made me an infidel," said Tom Paine. A vessel puts out to sea, and after it has been five days out there comes a cyclone. The vessel springs a leak. The helm will not work. What is the matter? It is not seaworthy. It never was seaworthy. Can you mend it now? It is too late. Down she goes with 250 passengers into a watery grave. What was the time to fix that vessel? What was the time to prepare it for the storm? In the drydock. Ah, my friends, do not wait until your children get out into the world, beyond the Narrows and out on the great voyage of life! It is too late then to mend their morals and their manners. The drydock of the Christian home is the place. Correct the sin now. Correct the evil now.

Just look at the character of your children now and get an intimation of what they are going to be. You can tell by the way that boy divides the apple what his proclivity is and what his sin will be and what style of discipline you ought to bring upon him. You see how he divides that apple? He takes nine-tenths of it for himself and he gives one-tenth to his sister. Well, let that go, and all his life he will want the best part of everything, and he will be grinding and grasping to the day of his death.

People burl their scorn at the life of Lord Byron. Lord Byron was not half so much to blame as his mother. The historian tells us that when her child was limping across the floor with his unsound foot, instead of acting like any other mother, she said, "Get out of my way, you lame brat!" Do not denounce Lord Byron half as much as you denounce his mother. All the scenes in Venice, all the scenes in Greece, all the scenes of outrage wherever he went, an echo of that bad mother's heart and that bad mother's life.

Two young men came to a door of wickedness. The one entered; the other turned back. Why? Difference of resolution, you say. No; the one had a Christian influence, the other had no pious training. The one man went on his evil way. He entered and went on. No early voice accosted him, but the other heard a voice, whose tones may have died from the ear 20 years

before, saying: "Don't go there! Don't go there!" I think it was almost the first time I ever made a religious address. It was in Dr. Bethune's church, Brooklyn; it was an anniversary of the Young Men's Christian association. I came in from my village home, and I remember nothing of that anniversary except that one of the speakers that night said: "Many years ago two young men stood at the door of the Park theater, New York. They were discussing whether they had better go in or not. There was an immoral play to be enacted that night. One of them said, 'I will not go in.' The other said: 'Don't be afraid. Let us go in. Who cares?' The one who entered went on from sin to sin, the terminus of his life delirium tremens, with which he died in a hospital. The other man turned back, came to Christ as his Saviour, entered the gospel ministry, and he stands before you tonight. What was it that stopped me at the door of the Park theater, New York, so many years ago? It was a pressure of a hand on my shoulder—the pressure of my mother's hand."

**Begin Early.**  
Begin early with your children. You stand on the banks of a river and you try to change its course. It has been rolling now for 100 miles. You cannot change it. But just go to the source of that river, go to where the water just drips down on the rock. Then with your knife make a channel this way and a channel that way, and it will take it. Come out and stand on the banks of your child's life when it is 30 or 40 years of age, or even 20, and try to change the course of that life. It is too late! It is too late! Go farther up at the source of life and nearest to the mother's heart, where the character starts, and try to take it in the right direction. But, oh, my friend, be careful to make a line, a distinct line between innocent hilarity on the one hand and vicious hilarity on the other. Do not think your children are going to ruin because they make a racket. All healthy children make a racket. But do not laugh at your child's sin because it is smart. If you do, you will cry after awhile because it is malicious. Remember it is what you do more than what you say that is going to affect your children. Do you suppose Noah would have got his family to go into the ark if he staid out? No. His sons would have said, "I am not going into the boat; there's something wrong; father won't go in; if father stays out, I'll stay out."

An officer may stand in a castle and look off upon an army fighting. But he cannot be much of an officer, he cannot excite much enthusiasm on the part of his troops standing in a castle or on a hilltop looking off upon the fight. It is a Garibaldi or a Napoleon I, who leaps into the stirrups and dashes ahead. And you stand outside the Christian life and tell your children to go in. They will not go. But you dash on ahead, you enter the kingdom of God, and they themselves will become good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Lead if you would have them follow. Have a family altar. Do not with long prayers wear out your children's knees. Do not have the prayer a repulsion. If you have a piano or an organ or a melodeon in the house, have it open while you are having prayers. If you say, "I cannot construct a prayer; I am slow of speech and never could construct a prayer," then take Matthew Henry's prayers or take the Episcopal church prayer book. There is nothing better than that. Put it down on the chair, gather your children about you and commend them to God. You say it will not amount to anything. It will long after you are under the soil. That son will remember father and mother at morning and evening prayers, and it will be a mighty help to him. And, above all, in private commend your children to God. Say: "Here, Lord, I am—all my imperfections of discipline and government. Here are these immortals. Make them thine forever. The angel that redeemeth us from all evil, bless the lads!"

**A Stupendous Question.**  
Are all your children safe? I know it is a stupendous question to ask, but I must ask it. Are all your children safe? A mother, when the house was on fire, got out the household goods, many articles of beautiful furniture, but forgot to ask until too late, "Are the children safe?" When the elements are melting with fervent heat and God shall burn the world up and the cry of "Fire! Fire!" shall resound amid the mountains and the valleys, will your children be safe?

I wonder if the subject strikes a chord in the heart of any man who had Christian parentage, but has not lived as he ought? God brought you here this morning to have your memory revived. Did you have a Christian ancestry? "Oh, yes!" says one man. "If there ever was a good woman, my mother was good." How she watched you when you were sick! Others wearied. If she got weary, she nevertheless was wakeful, and the medicine was given at the right time, and when the pillow was hot she turned it. And, oh, then, when you began to go astray, what a grief it was to her heart!

All the scene comes back. You remember the chairs, you remember the table, you remember the doorsill where you played, you remember the tones of her voice. She seems calling you now, not by the formal title with which we address you, saying, "Mr." this or "Mr." that, or "Honorable" this or "Honorable" that. It is just the first name, your first name, she calls you by this morning. She bids you to a better life. She says: "Forget not all the counsel I gave you, my wandering boy. Turn into paths of righteousness. I am waiting for you at the gate." Oh, yes, God brought you here this morning to have that memory revived, and I shout upward the tidings. Angels of God, send forward the news. Ring! Ring! The dead is alive again, and the lost is found!

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## PROBATE BUSINESS.

The following business was transacted by the probate court during the past week:  
Alexander McLaren estate, Greensboro. Appraisers inventory returned and accepted.

Alfred Cobb estate, Derby. Commissioners report returned and accepted.  
John Crowley minors, Albany. Guardian settles his guardian account.

Porter G. Hodgdon estate, Craftsbury. Administrator settles his account. Assignment made to widow.  
Aaron C. Hitchcock estate, Westfield. Last will presented for probate by W. B. Gilpin custodian thereof. Referred to April 2nd 1900.

Elvira Flint estate, Newport. Last will presented for probate by Albert Flint executor therein named. Referred to April 2nd 1900.

Erastus Freeman estate, Westfield. License granted administrator to sell real estate.

William Sabin, spendthrift, Troy. Guardian settles his account.

Samuel Cook, spendthrift, Troy. Guardian settles his account.

Frances J. Conant estate, Craftsbury. Will presented for probate by H. F. Graham, custodian. Referred to Barton, April 15th, 1900.

Stevens minors' Charleston. Guardian settles his account.

Mary E. Hinman estate, Charleston. B. F. Hamilton appointed administrator; J. B. Holton and H. G. Ruiter, appraisers and commissioners.

Clarence T., and Marion H. Gray minors, Newport. Homer Thrasher appointed guardian.

Sylvania Seavey estate, Barton. Appraisers inventory returned and accepted.

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